

## Colorado Parks and Wildlife

### *Dan Noble State Wildlife Area Summer Camp Parcel Fee Title Acquisition*

San Miguel County

500 acres

15 miles south of Norwood

#### Action Required

Recommend support for the fee title acquisition of the Summer Camp Parcel (\$0 for about 500 acres) through a conveyance from Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc.

#### Questions and Responses

1. Is Tri-State expending any funds for the acquisition? If so, how much?

Tri-State has an option to purchase the property from Summer Camp for \$1,200 per acre. The parcel being purchased is currently being surveyed to determine the precise acreage and boundaries. The surveyor believes the final acreage will be a fraction of an acre either side of 505 acres. If the parcel is 505 acres, the purchase price would be \$606,000.

# Capital Development Committee

## June 21, 2017—Property Transaction Proposal

### Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Wildlife

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>Action Required</b> | Pursuant to C.R.S. 33-1-105(3)(a) and C.R.S. 33-10-107(2) recommend to the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission support for the Division of Parks and Wildlife's proposal to acquire fee title to land abutting the southern boundary of Dan Noble State Wildlife Area. |
|------------------------|---|

| <b>General Information</b> |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Name                       | Dan Noble SWA – Summer Camp Parcel                      |
| Number of acres            | 500   |
| Location                   | 15 miles south of Norwood on County Road 44Z N and 31U. |
| County                     | San Miguel  |

| <b>Costs / Source of Funding</b>      |   |   |      |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|------|
| Purchase Price                        | No monetary consideration   | Funding Source  | N.A. |
|                                       | <i>Spending authority has already been approved for this project in the Long Bill.</i>  |   |      |
|                                       | Fiscal Year   |   | N.A. |
|                                       | Line Item   |   | N.A. |
|                                       | Appropriation   |   | N.A. |
|                                       | Remaining Unexpended Balance  |   | N.A. |
| Annual Monitoring and Operation Costs | \$1,090   | Funding for the monitoring and operation costs of the property will come from the Wildlife Operations Line Item under the Division Operations Group in the Long Bill. This cost includes an annual estimated Impact Assistance Grant payment of <b>\$340</b> for this property. |      |
| Development Costs                     | Two miles of wildlife friendly boundary fence (\$20,000). Eventually (five year time span) replace existing fence with wildlife friendly fence (\$6,500). | Funding for the development costs will come from Wildlife Operations Line Item under the Division Operations Group in the Long Bill.  |      |

### **Summary of Proposal:**

To accept a fee title conveyance, funded by Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc., of property abutting the southerly side of Dan Noble State Wildlife Area to mitigate impacts to Gunnison Sage Grouse from the upgrade of an existing Tri-State transmission line. This property is known by research and collar data to not only have a GUSG lek, but also to be extremely important nesting and brooding habitat for GUSG. Preservation of this parcel of land

is very important to an area that holds the primary core of the GUSG population in the San Miguel Basin.

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. has proposed a major upgrade to the existing 80 mile line Montrose-Nucla-Cahone 115-kV transmission line to operate at 230-kV. This transmission line is in Dolores, San Miguel, Montrose and Ouray Counties. Fifty-one miles of the transmission line are on US Bureau of Land Management land.

As required by the BLM approval process for allowing the line upgrades over its property, BLM prepared an Environment Assessment ("EA") addressing, among other matters, impacts of the project on wildlife habitat including, particularly, impacts on Gunnison Sage Grouse. A conservation strategy was designed by Tri-State, in consultation with CPW and biologist Tom Remington, to minimize and mitigate detriments to sage grouse habitat. Appendix B of the EA, Table B-4(5-6) states that Tri-State will "increase critical habitat protected in perpetuity" and provide "protection of habitat" to address "direct and indirect fragmentation impacts" by funding the purchase, on behalf of CPW, of a 500 acre parcel that abuts Dan Noble State Wildlife Area west and south the Miramonte Reservoir. Following initial publication and public comment, BLM approved the EA and issued its Final Decision and Finding of No Significant Impact on February 21, 2017.

The property currently is used for limited cattle grazing. If the property becomes part of Dan Noble State Wildlife Area, it will remain undeveloped with an emphasis on Gunnison Sage Grouse habitat preservation. The property also is year-round habitat for mule deer and elk.

According to a review of the first map referenced below, the Property lies outside the scope of regions of known or potential geothermal resources. Also, according to a review of the second map referenced below, the Property lies outside the Central Solar Power and the Wind Resource Generation Development areas.

Geothermal: November, 2003 US Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Geothermal Technologies Program.

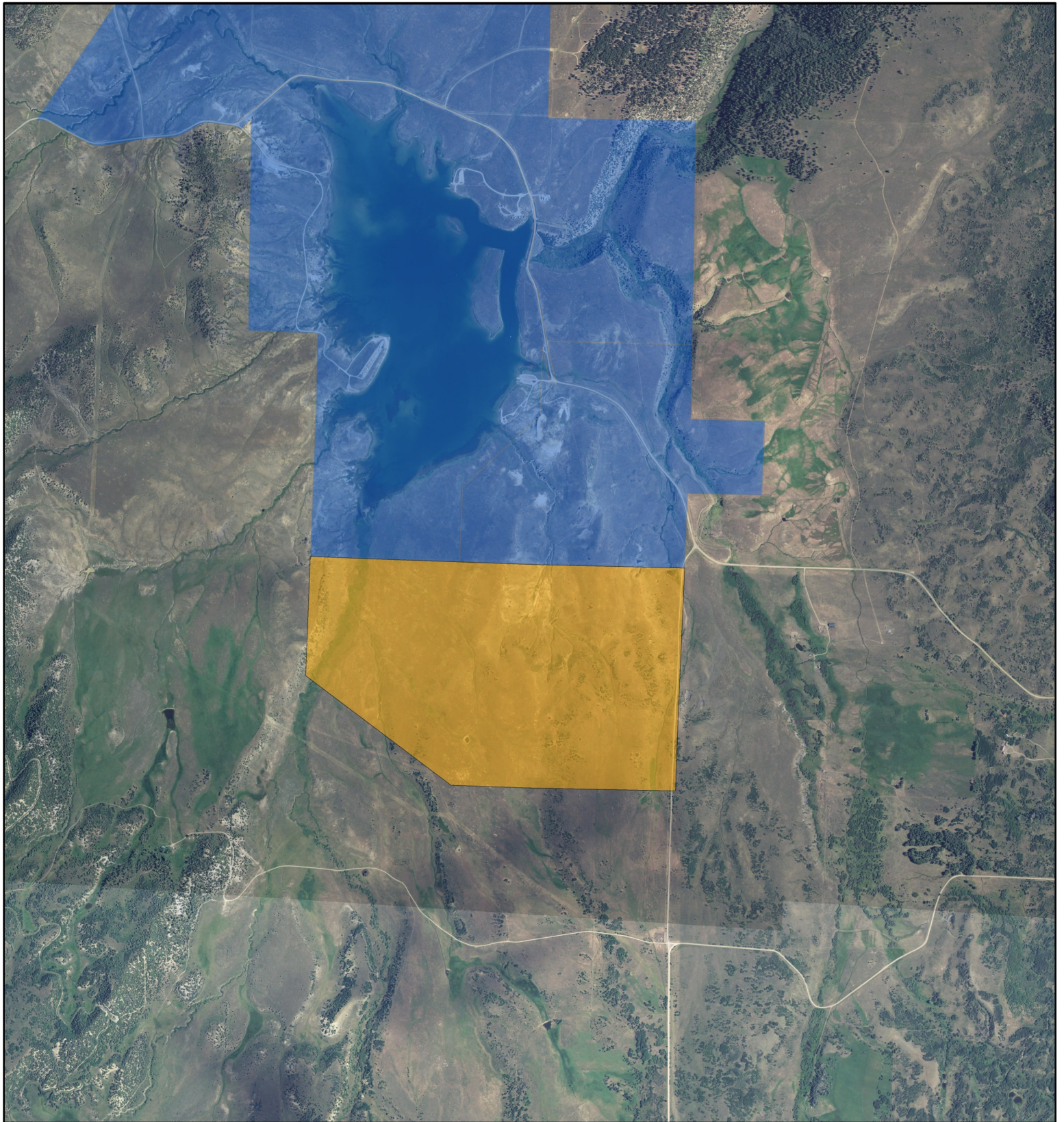
Wind and Solar: A map entitled "SB07-91 Renewable Resource Generation Development Areas" from "Renewable Energy Development Structure," a report of the Colorado Governor's Energy Office dated December 2009.

Mineral Interest Ownership: No mineral rights are owned by the surface owner. All mineral rights were reserved in a 1979 deed.



Attachments:

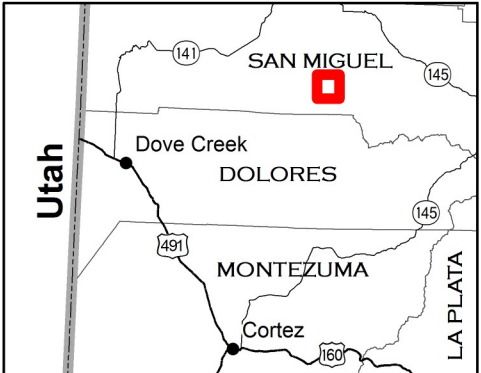
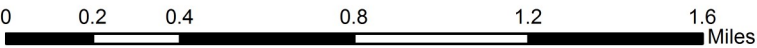
- Maps
- Concurrence letters



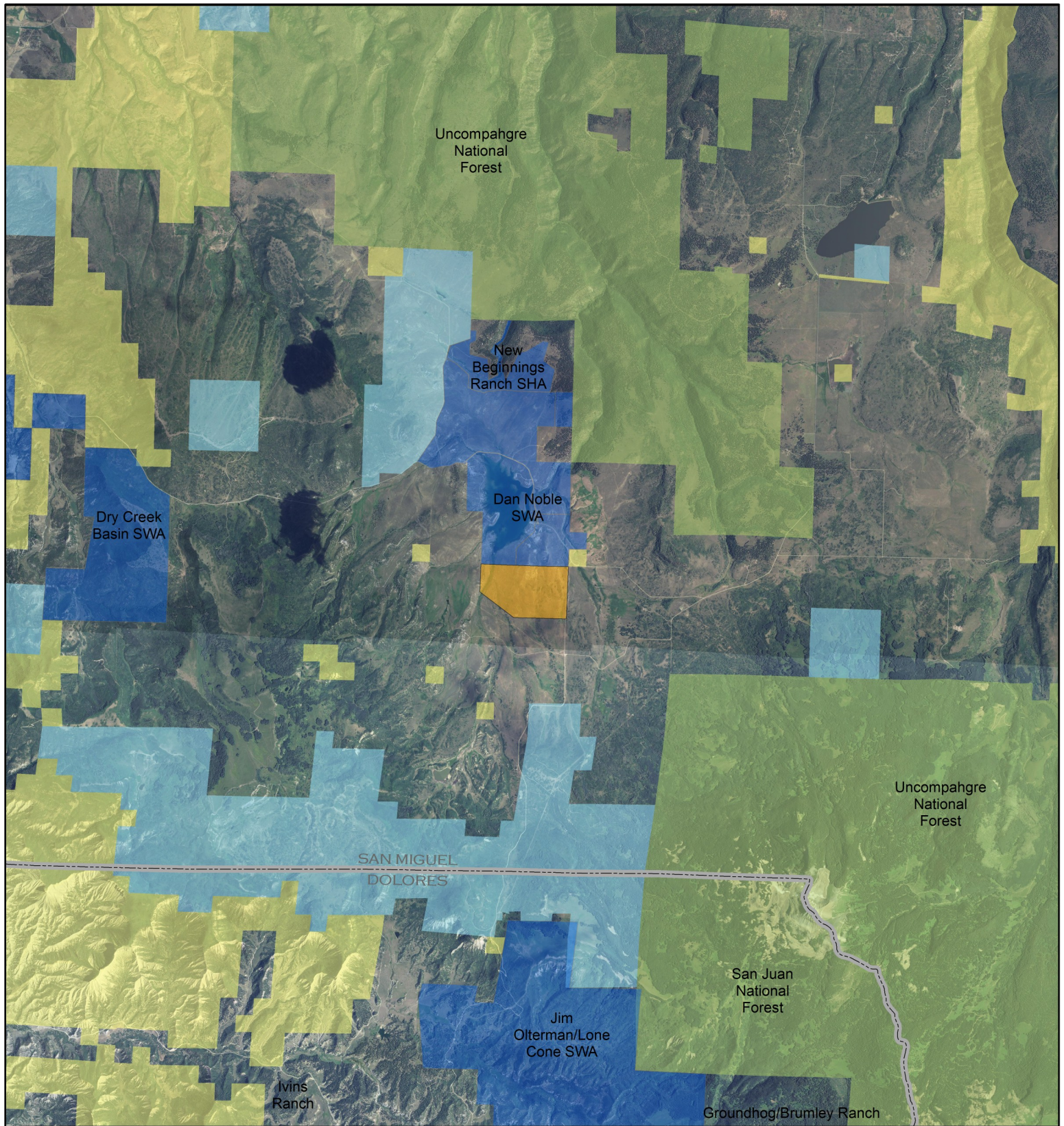


**Dan Noble SWA / Summer Camp Parcel Acquisition**  
**16-035-SW**  
**San Miguel County**

-  Summer Camp Parcel
-  Dan Noble SWA







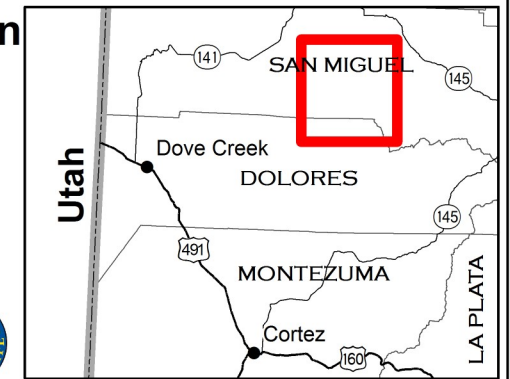
# **Dan Noble SWA / Summer Camp Parcel Acquisition 16-035-SW San Miguel County**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Summer Camp Parcel         |  Bureau of Land Management |
|  CPW Property and Easements |  US Forest Service         |
|  State Land Board           |   |

0 0.75 1.5 3 4.5 6 Miles



GIS Unit



MMF 3/29/2017:Properties\Area18\DanNobleSWA\SummerCampParcelAcquisition





## COLORADO

### Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Montrose Office  
2300 S. Townsend Avenue  
Montrose, CO 81401  
P 970.252.6000 | F 970.252.6053

May 18, 2017

San Miguel County Commissioners  
333 W Colorado Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
P. O. Box 1170  
Telluride, CO 81435

RE: Tri-State Generation and Transmission Gunnison sage-grouse habitat mitigation parcel

Dear San Miguel County Commissioners,

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) respectfully requests your support for legislative approval to accept as a donation, an approximately 500 acre parcel that is directly adjacent to CPW's existing Dan Noble State Wildlife Area. CPW would like to work with Tri-State Generation and Transmission (Tri-State) to facilitate habitat mitigation required for the portion of their Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Project that runs through Gunnison sage-grouse (GUSG) habitat. The parcel will be purchased fee title by Tri-State from the willing seller, then granted to CPW by donation. Dan Noble State Wildlife Area and the adjacent 500 +/- acre mitigation parcel are located in occupied Gunnison sage-grouse habitat approximately 12 miles south of the town of Norwood in San Miguel County, Colorado.

Tri-State submitted an application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a right-of-way grant amendment to improve the existing Montrose-Nucla-Cahone 115-kV transmission line to operate at 230-kV. The line improvement project crosses approximately 7.5 miles of occupied GUSG habitat in Dry Creek Basin. GUSG were listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in December of 2014 and 1,429,551 acres of Critical Habitat across its range were designated at the same time. BLM prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential effects of the project including potential impacts to GUSG. The finding of the EA was that the transmission line improvement project may adversely affect GUSG. Through the process of the EA, many options were discussed among cooperating agencies to minimize and mitigate any potential negative impacts to GUSG. The only feasible and tenable option for all cooperating agencies was a combination of permanent habitat protection, habitat improvement, along with a list of conservation measures related to construction practices and timing stipulations to minimize and mitigate impacts to GUSG. In their December 20, 2016 Biological Opinion, The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) agreed that the proposed transmission line improvement project may adversely affect GUSG. However, USFWS also stated that if all conservation measures identified in the EA were implemented, the line improvement project was not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of GUSG.

The 500 +/- acre mitigation parcel Tri-State identified to purchase is one of the highest priority parcels in regard to GUSG conservation because it contains a lek as well as some of the highest quality nesting and brood rearing habitat in the San Miguel Basin. This parcel is

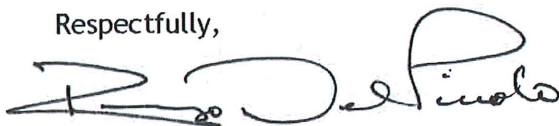


situated in the area that was identified by the San Miguel Basin GUSG Local Working Group as the highest conservation value and the highest need for protection as early as 1999 when GUSG were first recognized as a distinct species. The parcel is directly adjacent to Dan Noble State Wildlife Area which is 2,500 acres managed in large part to provide habitat for GUSG as well as other species and wildlife related recreation.

In order to accept the donated parcel, CPW respectfully requests your concurrence on this land transfer. The land donation is scheduled for review by the Capital Development Committee in June of 2017. Should you support or do not oppose this land transfer please forward a copy of this letter with your signature to me by May 31, 2017 either by mail or PDF attached to an email.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Renzo DelPiccolo: (Area Wildlife Manager)  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
2300 S. Townsend Ave.  
Montrose, CO 81401  
[renzo.delpiccolo@state.co.us](mailto:renzo.delpiccolo@state.co.us)

I support/do not oppose the above referenced land transfer from Tri-State to Colorado Parks and Wildlife.

  
Hilary Cooper  
San Miguel County Commissioner District 1

5/24/17  
Date

  
Joan May  
San Miguel County Commissioner District 2

5/24/17  
Date

  
Kris Holstrom  
San Miguel County Commissioner District 3

5/24/17  
Date

# SAN MIGUEL COUNTY

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

HILARY COOPER

KRIS HOLSTROM

JOAN MAY

May 30, 2017

The Honorable Daneya Esgar of the Capital Development Committee  
Colorado General Assembly  
200 East Colfax Avenue RM 307  
Denver, CO. 80203

Re: Summer Camp Ranch Acquisition (\$0 for 500 acres)

To The Honorable Daneya Esgar:

The San Miguel County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) strongly supports the donation by Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. (Tri-State) of the 500-acre Summer Camp Ranch parcel in south central San Miguel County to Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW).

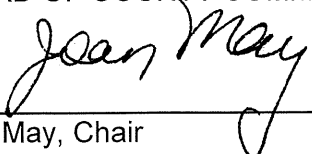
The Summer Camp Ranch is located approximately 12 miles south of Norwood, CO adjacent to the Dan Noble State Wildlife Area by the Miramonte Reservoir (see map). The parcel contains an active lek and brood-rearing habitat for the San Miguel Basin population of the Gunnison sage-grouse (GuSG). This parcel would increase the contiguous protected habitat owned and managed by CPW at the reservoir, providing a direct benefit and protection to the San Miguel Basin population.

San Miguel County has been involved as a cooperating agency in the Tri-State Montrose-Nucla-Cahone 230 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project along with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Tri-State offered to donate this parcel to the CPW as part of a conservation strategy to mitigate potential impacts to the GuSG. This donation is a key condition to the approvals of the transmission line project by the San Miguel County, the BLM and the USFWS.

The San Miguel County Board of County Commissioners were instrumental in championing this conservation effort along with Tri-State. We strongly believe acquisition by Tri-State and donation of this piece to CPW is in the best long-term interests of the bird and the citizens of San Miguel County. This was a long and difficult negotiation process, and we can ill afford additional delays in the replacement of this critical piece of infrastructure.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,  
SAN MIGUEL COUNTY, COLORADO  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
Joan May, Chair





# COLORADO

## Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Montrose Office  
2300 S. Townsend Avenue  
Montrose, CO 81401  
P 970.252.6000 | F 970.252.6053

May 25, 2017

Senator Don Coram  
200 E Colfax, RM 346  
Denver, CO 80203

RE: Tri-State Generation and Transmission Gunnison sage-grouse habitat mitigation parcel

Dear Senator Coram,

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) respectfully requests your support to accept as a donation, an approximately 500 acre parcel that is directly adjacent to CPW's existing Dan Noble State Wildlife Area, which is in Senate District 6. CPW would like to work with Tri-State Generation and Transmission (Tri-State) to facilitate habitat mitigation required for the portion of their Montrose-Nucla-Cahone Transmission Line Improvement Project that runs through Gunnison sage-grouse (GUSG) habitat. The parcel will be purchased fee title by Tri-State from the willing seller, then granted to CPW by donation. Dan Noble State Wildlife Area and the adjacent 500 +/- acre mitigation parcel are located in occupied Gunnison sage-grouse habitat approximately 12 miles south of the town of Norwood in San Miguel County, Colorado.

Tri-State submitted an application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a right-of-way grant amendment to improve the existing Montrose-Nucla-Cahone 115-kV transmission line to operate at 230-kV. The line improvement project crosses approximately 7.5 miles of occupied GUSG habitat in Dry Creek Basin. GUSG were listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act in December of 2014 and 1,429,551 acres of Critical Habitat across its range were designated at the same time. BLM prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential effects of the project including potential impacts to GUSG. The finding of the EA was that the transmission line improvement project may adversely affect GUSG. Through the process of the EA, many options were discussed among cooperating agencies to minimize and mitigate any potential negative impacts to GUSG. The only feasible and tenable option for all cooperating agencies was a combination of permanent habitat protection, habitat improvement, along with a list of conservation measures related to construction practices and timing stipulations to minimize and mitigate impacts to GUSG. In their December 20, 2016 Biological Opinion, The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) agreed that the proposed transmission line improvement project may adversely affect GUSG. However, USFWS also stated that if all conservation measures identified in the EA were implemented, the line improvement project was not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of GUSG.

The 500 +/- acre mitigation parcel Tri-State identified to purchase is one of the highest priority parcels in regard to GUSG conservation because it contains a lek as well as some of the highest quality nesting and brood rearing habitat in the San Miguel Basin. This parcel is situated in the area that was identified by the San Miguel Basin GUSG Local Working Group as



the highest conservation value and the highest need for protection as early as 1999 when GUSG were first recognized as a distinct species. The parcel is directly adjacent to Dan Noble State Wildlife Area which is 2,500 acres managed in large part to provide habitat for GUSG as well as other species and wildlife related recreation. San Miguel County Commissioners discussed this project at their May 24<sup>th</sup> Board of County Commissioners meeting and fully support Tri-State's donation to CPW to conserve GUSG habitat.

CPW respectfully requests your support for this land transfer, which is scheduled for review by the Capital Development Committee in June of 2017. Please indicate below whether you support or do not support this donation. Please forward a copy of this letter with your signature to me by June 2nd, preferably by PDF attached to an email. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me or to DNR's legislative liaison, Doug Vilsack, at [douglas.vilsack@state.co.us](mailto:douglas.vilsack@state.co.us) or 720-456-8956.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Renzo DelPiccolo: (Area Wildlife Manager)  
Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
2300 S. Townsend Ave.  
Montrose, CO 81401  
[renzo.delpiccolo@state.co.us](mailto:renzo.delpiccolo@state.co.us)

Please check one and sign:

- ☒ - I support/do not oppose the above referenced land transfer from Tri-State to Colorado Parks and Wildlife.
- ☐ - I do not support the above referenced land transfer from Tri-State to Colorado Parks and Wildlife.



Don Coram  
Colorado State Senator  
District 6

6/5/2017  
Date